

**United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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Instruction Memorandum No. HR-2003-038
Expires: 09/30/04

To: All State Directors
Attention: Personnel Officers

From: Director, National Human Resources Management Center

Subject: Guides on Position Sensitivity and Background Investigations and Suitability
Adjudication

Program Area: Human Resources

Purpose: This Instruction Memorandum (IM) publicizes the availability of guides prepared by the National Human Resources Management Center (NHRMC) to assist you in conducting position sensitivity designations, background investigations, and suitability adjudication. The guides have been prepared utilizing the most recent policy determinations and publications issued or made by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the Department of the Interior (DOI) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Material from the suitability and position sensitivity courses conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Graduate School have also been incorporated into the guide.

The guides are not attached, but are available on the NHRMCs web site at (http://web.nc.blm.gov/nhrmc/Classification/Blm_Pos_Sensitivity.htm).

Policy/Action: Positions designated under the July 17, 1989, 441 DM must receive redesignation when they are vacated and refilled, or reclassified. Documentation of the designation must be filed with the record copy of the position description.

Timeframe: Effective immediately.

Budget Impact: None directly. However, position sensitivity designations determine the investigation required of incumbents of the position. Care must be taken to ensure that each position receives the minimum and proper position sensitivity designation.

Background: The manuals pertaining to investigations, suitability determinations, and position risk assessment have been updated by DOI. These guides are provided to assist those responsible for these areas. Departmental policy in these subject areas is found in Departmental Manual (DM) series 441 (<http://elips.doi.gov/table.cfm>).

On December 6, 2001, the BLM Washington Office issued an Instruction Memorandum (IM) 2002-042, Subject: Requesting Background Investigations for Bureau of Land Management Employees. Change 1 to this IM was issued on December 2, 2002. Change 2 to this IM was issued on March 20, 2003. Changes 1 and 2 provide significant policy on position risk designation.

Common positions within BLM have been evaluated for public trust and national security risk designation. Sample position designation risk designations have been recorded on the Position Sensitivity Designation Form, DI 1959, and published on a NHRMC website (http://web.nc.blm.gov/nhrmc/Classification/Blm_Pos_Sensitivity.htm). These samples are provided as guidance and are not provided as the definitive designation for all positions. Each position must be evaluated independently.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: The guidance is provided as supplementary material to the DOI 441 series.

Coordination: The guides were each prepared by a team of human resources specialists drawn from the NHRMC and state offices. Security specialists from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and BLM provided assistance in interpretation of policy and guidance. The draft guides were sent to the BLM human resources and security community for comment. The comments were evaluated and incorporated into the guides as appropriate.

Contact: The point of contact on position sensitivity designation is Todd Ryan, telephone (303)236-6669, E-mail: todd_ryan@blm.gov. The point of contact on background investigations or suitability determinations is Frank Frymire, telephone (303)236-0504, E-mail: frank_frymire@blm.gov.

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